



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

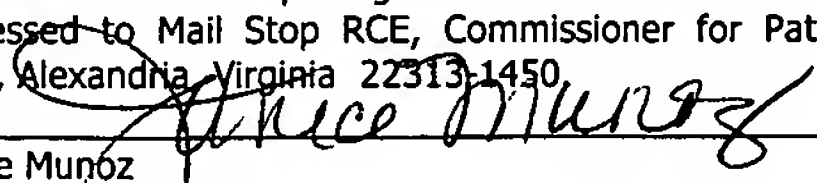
In re Applicants:	Craig D. Johnson et al.	§	Art Unit:	3679
		§		
Serial No.:	10/708,517	§		
		§	Examiner:	Aaron M. Dunwoody
Filed:	March 9, 2004	§		
		§		
Title:	JOINING TUBULAR	§	Docket No.	68.0322US
	MEMBERS	§		(SHL.0238US)

Mail Stop RCE
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Dear Sir:

Please amend the claims accordance with the following CLAIM AMENDMENTS section; and consider the comments in the following REMARKS section.

Date of Deposit: December 12, 2006
I hereby certify under 37 CFR 1.8(a) that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as **first class mail** with sufficient postage on the date indicated above and is addressed to Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

Janice Munoz